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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [SY](#) [IR](#) [RU](#)  
SUBJECT: NEW RUSSIAN MOOD MUSIC AT IAEA BOARD MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador Gregory Schulte Reasons 1.5 (B and D)

¶1. (C) The just-concluded March 2 - 5 meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors saw a striking improvement in the tone and content of US-Russian cooperation on our nonproliferation agenda. The most important result of this was the joint statement of the P5 1 delegations on Iran -- the first such statement by our six governments in Vienna. In negotiating this agreement, Mission officers from the Ambassador on down collaborated closely with Russian counterparts -- all of whom were focused on the need to think creatively about finding a set of words that would work for all our capitals and would keep the pressure on Iran to change its approach to the IAEA.

¶2. (C) The Iran statement was not the only element of US-Russian collaboration in Vienna this month. We also worked closely to bring to the IAEA Board the Russian and "Nuclear Threat Initiative" proposal for the creation of an international mechanism for reliable access to nuclear fuel (RANF). After months of seeming ambivalence, the Russian Mission in Vienna is now running with the RANF proposal, to the point that other missions are saying that it is the Russians (and not us for a change) who are in a rush to get this done. The Russians here were also increasingly comfortable working together to advance this agenda. The Russian DCM, for instance, readily joined his American counterpart to lean on the Indians, urging them not to join others in the G-77 in seeking to block a debate on these fuel proposals.

¶3. (C) Even on issues where we differ, such a term limits for the IAEA Director General (which Moscow opposes on grounds that it could be read as a criticism of El Baradei) our Russian counterparts have been apologetic about having to part ways.

¶4. (C) On our two other safeguards verification cases, Syria and the DPRK, Russia hewed close to its traditional lines. The Russian statement on Syria joined the NAM and Arab group in regretting the destruction of the Al Kibar facility that impeded the IAEA's verification mission and commended the IAEA for steering clear of "politicization" -- when in fact the Director General's role in this matter has been highly politicized. On North Korea, the Russians echoed earlier comments about the need to "make active use of the IAEA" in the disablement process. Septels will report in detail on the Board proceedings, but as viewed from Vienna, one new element was a notably improved US-Russia dynamic that hopefully will last as we head into contentious debates over the IAEA Director General election, the budget, and verification issues in the Middle East.  
SCHULTE